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Is the Third Hague Conference to Fail?

The failure of the Third Hague Peace Conference to occur at the time anticipated will be one of the most calamitous events in modern civilization. Even the talk of failure is distressing.

The Second Hague Conference completed its program seven years ago this autumn, and, according to expectation—indeed, according to solemn promise—the Third Conference should already have been announced and its program well under way for the coming year. Contrariwise, nothing has been done, and there are a number of indications that the conference will be prevented from meeting, if possible.

When the conference of 1907, after four months of earnest, conscientious effort, signed the Thirteenth Conventions, the representatives of the nations, in solemn assembly, voted that another conference of the powers should be convened after a period about equal to that which elapsed between the meetings of the first two conferences. The powers represented in

1907, forty-four in number, ratified this action of the Second Conference. The Third Hague Conference has therefore been formally agreed upon, and the committee on program ought before now to have been completed and at work. On the contrary, only a few preliminary national committees have been named, and the general international committee on program has not been constituted, or even seriously talked of.

Is it to be supposed that the united nations of the world can, after their solemn agreement at The Hague, fail in such colossal fashion to keep their pledged word, and thus repudiate their obligations? It is unthinkable.

What are the causes which seem to be operating to prevent action by the leading powers? They are studiously careful not to let their real reasons appear. The Russian government pretends not to be ready to convene the conference. The United States, England, Germany, and the rest appear to have no particular interest in the subject. Is it that the Czar's government has gone so far that they are afraid, because of their great military power, to make any further advances? Is Germany still unalterably in the grip of militarism and determined to take no steps toward alleviating the situation? Is England wholly intent upon outstripping all the other powers with her gigantic naval armaments? Is the United States determined, at whatever cost, to gain commercial supremacy by means of the Panama Canal? Are the naval and military promoters, alarmed over what has been accomplished by the first two Hague Conferences and the rapid spread of the peace movement, redoubling their energies to prevent anything being done by the Third Hague Conference?

It is difficult to say how many of these causes or partial causes are operating toward the delay or possible prevention of a Third Peace Conference, but it is clear that the nations are paralyzed by fear of each other and urged on through the efforts of the war promoters to ever greater sacrifices to keep ahead of their supposed national enemies. What can be done? The President of the United States, on the request of the Interparliamentary Union, called the conference of 1907. It was a great success. Much more might President Wilson, in consideration of the action of the Second Hague Conference, proceed to call a third meeting at The Hague. There is no propriety in waiting for the Czar to take the initiative at this time, inasmuch as the conference of 1907 declared that such another meeting should be held at about this time. Indeed, unless some other step is taken, it is incumbent upon the President of the